

TIMES AND SEASONS.

Spring is green,
Birds are seen,
Tales of love relating;
After showers
Bloom the flowers,
Every bud dilating;
Everywhere
Birds must pair:
Happy by their mating!
Living, loving—
All the world is loving!

Summer glow
Lies low
In the fields before us;
Hear just there,
In the glare,
Katy-dids sonorous;
Upon high
Laughs the sky
At the Earth's dull chorus.
Living, loving—
All the world is loving!

Autumn sad
We have had,
All the leaves are yellow;
One and all
Let them fall.
Death's a jolly fellow!
Summer dead,
Earth is red,
Every sunbeam's mellow,
Living, loving—
All the world is loving!

Winter's here,
Bright and clear,
Pleasantest of weather;
See him stand
Tall and grand,
With his icy feather!
Young and old
Feet the cold,
Closely cling together,
Living, loving—
All the world is loving!

FORK-TONGUED.

"Harry!" she gasped, in a strange, harsh, cracked voice; and, as I started and looked up from my work, there was my wife coming toward me, with her arms stretched out, her eyes fixed, and a horrible, ghastly look upon her white face, that made me drop my spade and run to meet her. I caught her just as she was falling, when her eyes closed and she gave a shiver that seemed to shake her whole body.

This was soon after we had settled out in the up-country, and there was only another hut here and there in those days; but, after years of knocking about at home, trying to get an honest living and never succeeding, we had to make our minds to try Australia, and here we were, living in a log hut I had knocked up for myself, shepherding and doing what little I could in the shape of gardening; for that being my right trade, with all the beautiful rich soil lying fallow, it did seem a sin to me not to have a turn at it; so, getting what seeds I could from Sydney, and adding to the few I had in my chest, I managed to make quite a little Eden of the bit of land I broke up around our hut. We were not saving money, not to any extent, but there was a roof over our heads, and no rent to pay, lots of vegetables of our own planting, and not costing anything, plenty of work to do, and, one sort and another, always plenty to eat; so that, after what we had gone through in England, you may be sure we were willing to put up with such inconveniences as fell to our share; and, as a matter of course, there were things to encounter out there in what some people would call a wilderness, though it was a wilderness that blossomed like a rose. There were times when we were in dread of the blacks, who had done some very queer things here and there about; then the place was terribly lonely and out of the way if you wanted the doctor; and Mary used to joke me because I never could get a pint of beer, but I found I could get on just as well without it, and, my word, what a capital cup of tea we had out there.

Well, Mary came out to me that day looking so horribly ghastly that, being naturally too fast at fancying troubles in advance, I saw directly half a score of blacks coming to spear us, and some of them knocking out the children's brains with their clubs—and not the first time either, but in a few moments the poor girl opened her eyes and began to stare about her. There were no blacks to be seen. Little Joe was sitting in the path playing, and, though I looked along the edge of the wood behind the house, I could see no signs of danger; so I began to see she must have been taken ill, and turned over in my own mind how I should get help for her.

Just then her face grew contracted again as her thoughts seemed to go back, and gasping once more, Harry, Harry," she gave another shudder, and said, "The baby—a snake!"

I could not see myself, but I know I turned pale, all the blood seeming to rush to my heart, for if there is anything of which I am afraid it is a snake, even going so far as to dislike eels, of which there were plenty in the river, close at hand.

I don't know how we got there, but the next thing I remember is standing at the hut window, with Mary holding little Joe tight in her arms, and I looking through at the cradle where our

little thing of nine months old was lying; and my heart seemed to be turning to ice as I saw nestled in the foot of the cradle, partly hidden in the blanket, with some of its horrible coils in full sight, and its head resting upon them, the largest snake I had seen since I had been in the country. The feeling was something awful, and I stood there for a few moments leaning upon the round handle of the hoe I had caught up, not able to move, for my eyes were fixed upon the head of that hideous beast, and I expected every moment that the baby would wake and make some movement sufficient to irritate the snake, and then I felt that the little thing must die.

What should I do? I asked myself as the horrible feeling of helplessness wore off. If I crept in and reached the cradle side unheeded, I dared not chop at the beast for fear of injuring the child, for I could see that some of the folds lay right across it. I dared not make a noise, lest the next moment the child should wake as well as the reptile, for I knew the rapidity with which the reptile could wreath fold after fold around the object it attacked; while, if of a poisonous nature, they strike in an instant. Thoughts came swiftly enough, but they were unavailing; for to wait till the baby woke, or to go in and attack the snake, seemed equally dangerous. Even if I made a slight noise the danger seemed as great, since, though the snake might wake first and glide off, the probabilities were just as great that the child might wake at the same time.

And so I turned over the chances again and again my eyes all the while fixed upon the two sleeping occupants of the cradle, whose pleasant warmth had evidently attracted the reptile.

"I went in and saw it there," whispered my wife, and then, without taking my eyes for an instant from the snake, I whispered the one word "gun," and she glided from my side.

I did not know then, but she told me afterward, how she had carried the little boy to a distance and given him some flowers to play with, while she crept back to the hut, and reaching in at the kitchen window, brought me my gun, for I had not stirred. And now, as I grasped the piece in my hand, knowing as I did that it was loaded, it seemed of no use, for I dare not fire; but with trembling hands, I felt in my pockets to see if there was a bullet in them, and then softly pulling out the ramrod, I unscrewed the piece and let the shot fall pattering out, when I softly forced down the bullet upon the powder, examined the cap and stood ready waiting for a chance; for I thought that the shot might have scattered, and if ever so little, might have injured the child instead of its enemy.

And there we stood for quite half an hour, watching intently that horrible beast completely nestled in the blanket, expecting momentarily that the baby would awake, while my hand trembled so that I could not hold the gun steady. One minute I was thinking that I had done wrong in changing the charge, the next minute that I was right, then I fancied the gun might miss fire, or that I might slay my own child. A hundred horrible thoughts entered my mind before little Joe began to cry out to his mother, and she glided away while I muttered to myself, "Thank Heaven!" for she was spared from seeing what followed.

As if at one and the same moment, the child and the snake woke up. I saw the baby's hand move, and its little arms thrown out, while from the motion beneath the blanket I knew that it must have kicked a little. Then there was a rapid movement in the cradle, and as I glanced along the gun-barrel, taking aim, there was the whole of the horrible reptile exposed to view, coil gliding on coil, as it seemed to fill the whole cradle; had my gun been charged with shot I should have fired, so as to have disabled some parts of its body; but with only a single bullet, I felt that the head must be the part attacked when opportunity offered.

Glide, glide, glide, one coil over another, quickly and easily, as it were, untying its knotted body, while now the head slowly rose from where it had been lying, and crept nearer and nearer to the child's place, the forked tongue darting in and out, and playing rapidly on either side of its hideous mouth. I could see the glance of the snake's eyes, and expected every moment to hear the little one shriek in terror as the lowered head rested over her breast. But no, the child lay perfectly still for a few minutes, and then I stood trembling in every limb as I saw the snake's head drawn back, and then begin to sway to and fro, and from side to side, the glistening neck of the beast gently undulating, while the tongue still darted

in and out of the dreadful-looking mouth.

Now was the time when I should have fired, but I was too unnerved! and laying down my gun I seized my hoe, meaning to attack the beast with its stout handle; but my hand fell paralyzed at my side as I saw the little one in the cradle smile and laugh at the gently undulating head of the snake; while, as the agony grew to be greater than I could bear, in seeing the little white hands try to catch at it as it swayed to and fro, my powers seemed to come back. I snatched up the gun and, as the snake's head was drawn back preparatory to striking, I pulled the trigger, when the sharp crack of the percussion cap alone followed—perhaps providentially, for in my trembling state I might have injured the child. Then I saw a rapid wreathing of the coils in the cradle, and as the tail of the snake glided over the side, everything around me seemed to swim, and I tried to catch at the wall of the hut to save myself from falling.

But that soon went off, and gazing in at the window I tried to make out the whereabouts of my enemy, as I recapped and tapped the gun, so that the powder might run up the nipple.

The snake was nowhere to be seen, and darting in I seized the child, and carried it out to its mother, when, now feeling relieved of one horrible calamity, I obtained my shot-pouch from the kitchen, rammed down a charge upon the bullet, and cautiously went in search of the reptile.

I knew he must still be in the part of the hut we used for a sleeping place, and after cautiously peering about, I came upon the hole where it had taken refuge—an opening between the roughly-sawn planks laid loosely down to form a floor, while, unless there was an outlet beneath the woodwork, I felt that the beast must be there; and to make it more probable, there was our cat, that we had bought a kitten in Sydney, gazing with staring eyes down at the hole.

Just then I heard a soft rustling beneath my feet, and as I looked down, I could see between the two boards the scaly body gliding along. The next moment there came the loud report of the gun, the place was full of smoke, there was a loud scuffling noise, and as I looked down between the boards where the charge had forced a passage through, there was no sign of the snake.

"Harry, Harry!" shrieked my wife just then, and on rushing out, there was the beast writhing about in the path, evidently badly wounded, while some crushed-down flowers by the hut wall showed plainly the hole of communication. I never saw a snake writhe and twist as that creature did, but I was too excited then to feel afraid, and a few blows from the butt-end of my gun laid it so that there was only a little movement left in its body, which did not stop for an hour or two after I had cut off its head with an ax.

I should have liked to skin the beast, but I could not master my horror. I measured it, though; fourteen feet three inches long it was, and as thick as my arm; while as to its weight, I saw the cradle rock to and fro heavily as it glided over the side.

Snakes are scarce now in these parts; for there isn't a man in Queensland that does not wage war against them; and where there was one settler then, there are scores now.

HARRY MEIGGS.

A peculiar bill, which is nothing more or less than a direct concession to wealth as a ransom for crime, has recently passed the California Legislature. It relates to the legal disabilities, mildly stated of one Meiggs, who is now known as the "Railway King" of Peru, and, indeed, it may be said of South America. This man, who has filled Chili so full of railroad lines that he has been compelled to call her resources, "too limited" for his industry, and has nearly made a bankrupt of Peru by the railroad schemes he has consummated there, left San Francisco in 1854 clandestinely, having committed a series of forgeries with such success as to prevent their development until he was safely in South America, with his ill-gotten fortune. Having finished his railway enterprises in the South American States, and longing to shine in the splendor of wealth at San Francisco again, he has managed, through agents and, it is believed, with the aid of his money, to secure the passage of the bill which gives him assurance that, when he sails back into the harbors of California, the golden State will fall upon his neck and kiss her Prodigal Son, and no doubt get up a huge feast. Suppose he had been poor?

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Symptoms of Catarrh.

Dull, heavy headache, obstruction of nasal passages, discharge falling into throat, sometimes profuse, watery, acid, thick and tenacious, mucous, purulent, mucopurulent, bloody, putrid, offensive, etc. In others a dryness, dry, watery, weak or inflamed eyes, ringing in ears, deafness, hawking and coughing to clear the throat, ulcerations, scabs from ulcers, voice altered, nasal twang, offensive breath, impaired smell and taste, dizziness, mental depression, tickling cough, etc. Only a few of the above symptoms are likely to be present in any case at one time. No disease is more common or less understood by physicians. The proprietor of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy will pay \$500 reward for an incurable case.

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